

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 MANAMA 00748 021431Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 EB-08 /031 W
-----022019Z 034908 /45

R 021044Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA BAHRAIN

TO USDOC WASHDC

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 4448

AMEMBASSY ATHENS GREECE

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN SAUDI ARABIA

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY DOHA QATAR

AMEMBASSY JIDDA SAUDI ARABIA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT KUWAIT

UNCLAS MANAMA 748

ATHENS FOR RTDO

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BDIS

SUBJECT: ALLEGEDLY DANGEROUS FAULTS IN CADILLAC SEVILLES

1. LOCAL DOCTOR HAS REPORTED TO EMBASSY THAT HIS NEW CADILLAC SEVILLE BURST INTO FLAMES SPONTANEOUSLY AND WAS TOTALLY DESTROYED. POLICE HAVE TOLD DOCTOR THAT FIRE WAS DUE TO MANUFACTURER'S ELECTORAL/MECHANICAL FAULT. DOCTOR CLAIMED (AND WE ARE CHECKING) THAT THIS IS THIRD CASE OF THIS KIND IN BAHRAIN; TWO OTHERS REPORTEDLY INVOLVED TWO MEMBERS OF RULING FAMILY, ONE A BROTHER OF FONMIN. DOCTOR, WHOSE WIFE IS MEMBER OF RULING FAMILY, SAID HE HAS HEARD OF EIGHT SIMILAR INSTANCES IN SAUDI ARABIA, AND THAT OTHER OWNERS OF SEVILLES HERE ARE BECOMING FEARFUL OF DRIVING THEIR CARS.

2. DOCTOR SAID LOCAL GM AGENT HAS REFERRED HIM TO DUBAI AGENT WHO, IN TURN, REFERRED HIM TO ATHENS REGIONAL GM REPRESENTATIVE. AGENTS APPARENTLY CLAIM THAT GM, NOT THEY, HAS RESPONSIBILITY
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SINCE ALL CARS INVOLVED ARE VERY NEW AND STILL UNDER FACTORY GUARANTEES.

3. WE WILL OF COURSE SEEK TO CONFIRM FOREGOING, AND TO GET MORE SPECIFIC INFORMATION, BUT, MEANWHILE, WOULD APPRECIATE KNOWING IF GM HAS HAD TROUBLE WITH, OR ISSUED RECALLS, ON THIS MODEL CAR. CADILLAC'S SEVILLE MODEL HAS PROVEN ATTRACTIVE IN

BAHRAIN MARKET (SOME EIGHTY NEW MODELS REPORTEDLY HAVE BEEN SOLD HERE), AND PERHAPS ELSEWHERE IN REGION AS WELL, AND IT WOULD BE TOO BAD IF THIS RECENT AMERICAN PENETRATION OF LUXURY CAR MARKET WERE NIPPED IN BUD BY EITHER RUMORS OR ACTUAL DEFECT. IF WE TURN UP EVIDENCE THAT PROBLEM IS INDEED ONE OF MANUFACTURE, IT MIGHT BE WORTH GM'S TROUBLE AND NAME TO SEND A TEAM SINCE LOCAL AGENTS NEITHER WELL-EQUIPPED NOR WELL DISPOSED TO HANDLE SUCH SITUATION.
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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Event:
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